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shrine of the local deity (*yül-lha*, (*Yul-lha*)), where she offers up some *chang*. His father and three of his relatives have, in the meantime, carried a large pile of *tsampa* up to the same place, and they, too, present it to the god as an offering. A lama will then draw the figure of a stag in the dust in front of the shrine, and will shoot at it with an arrow from a bow he has brought. This is supposed to kill all evil which might attack the child.

Next, when a boy is between four and five, his hair is ritually cut in a ceremony which goes by the name of *Raldag* (probably *Ral-ltag*, "long hair-neck hair"). After three days of feasting in which the whole family, their relatives and their friends take part, the child's maternal uncle (*azhang* (*a-zhang*)) shears all his nephew's hair off and takes the locks to each person present in turn. In exchange for looking at the hair, they each give a small piece of money to the parents as a lucky offering.

The first doctor whom I saw was called Sönam Tashi (*bSod-Nams-bKra-shis*) and he was a lama from a village called Bardgi. He informed me that there were quite a lot of nervous ailments in Lahul, the principal ones being epilepsy and hysteria. The first of these two appeared when the person was about fifteen years old, and he attributed the cause to alcohol. He thought, too, that it might have some connection with the high incidence of venereal diseases to be found in the valley, infections which he said had been introduced from Kulu. Hysteria often brought with it symptoms of frigidity in women and of impotence in men, and he had a number of patients suffering in this way. As a cure for epilepsy, he advocated beating with hot juniper branches. Hysteria was better cured, he thought, by administering pills made of paper upon which prayers had been written.

There was a Government Hospital at Kyelang, and on the 28th June 1938 I went there to interview its director, Dr. Bhagwan Singh. I asked him about Tibetan medicine, and who the local doctors were in Lahul. He told me that there were quite a number of them and that they went by the name of *amchi* (*Am-ch'hi* or *Aem-ch'hi*). The best among them was Katug (*Ka-bTug*) of Chelling, but there were also Tsering Norbu (*Ts'he-ring Nor-bu*) of Billing, Dön-drup (*Don-Grub*) of Kardang, and the old uncle of the Wazir, Thakur Mangal Chand, *amchi* of Kyelang, whose Tibetan name was Tashi Dawa (*bKra-shis Zla-ba*). According to Dr. Bhagwan Singh, ayurvedic medicine (although I think this was only his way of naming Tibetan medicine as distinct from the Western system) was practised, but extra to this, considerable use was made of Tibetan medicinal herbs.

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There were a few instances of frigidity and impotence, Tashi Dawa said. He treated these with aphrodisiacs and they gave him no more trouble after that. The medicine used in such cases was the juice of the Japutsitsi plant, popularly called Gege of Wangla, (I was not able to identify this plant botanically and therefore cannot give its Latin name).

I met Thakur Mangal Chand, alias Tashi Dawa again, upon other occasions, and was treated to long discourses on Tibetan medicine. The data, which I noted at the time appears to be irrelevant to the question of polyandry, however, apart from the interesting cases mentioned above, so I shall abstain from giving a fuller account of it here. It is nevertheless perhaps worth mentioning that I heard from the *amchi* that abortion was practised on unmarried women and even on married ones in certain circumstances (when it was too apparent that conception was not due to relations with a husband). To bring about the required results, he made use of a mixture of horse-blood, red soot called *tsot*(?), musk and bee's wax.

On another occasion, I was interested to hear from a *gelong* (*dGe-sLong*), or high ordained lamaist priest, called Dön-drup, whom I met on the 27th of June, 1938, in the village of Billing near Kyelang, of the way in which sex plays a role in reincarnation. When a soul is searching for a womb in which to be conceived for rebirth, should the woman eventually chosen love her husband, it is sure that the new earthly form taken will be female. If, on the contrary, the woman does not love her husband, a boy will be born.

This statement was strangely reminiscent of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* by W. Y. Evans-Wentz (Third Edition, 1957), in which it is said that if the deceased, who is to be reborn, is about become a male, an intense feeling of aversion for the father and of attraction for the mother comes upon him, or vice-versa as regards birth as a female.

B. POLYANDRY IN RUPCHU (*RUP-CH'HU*) AND LADAK (*LA-DWAGS*)

1. RUPCHU

On the way between Lahul and the Rupchu plateau, I encountered many people on the road, mainly in the evening when we reached camping places. These people varied between Tibetan nomads moving south with goods to sell, Lahulis visiting Kulu or returning from there, and Tibetan pilgrims on their way to and from the holy Buddhist places in The Indian plains.

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595 601 whom she lived in Leh. Three other daughters, Kundzom, Tsomo and Rolma Putit, were all married out in *bag-ma*, the two first of these, at least, to other families. They were the mistresses, respectively, of the [791] Ragasha and the Azhang-ni-pa households, but their younger sister had married a certain Sang-gyä P'hüntzok who, curiously enough, was a convert to Buddhism from his original Moslem faith, – surely a very rare occurrence. He was employed as a manager of the Himis gompa, where he was in charge of trade and accounts, and made a comfortable [792] living. But he had no household, and no *zhing-kham* to hand down, so that they lived in quarters in the monastery grounds. His conversion was responsible for this; the situation could nevertheless be remedied if he purchased some land and settled on it. The couple had three children, and the succession was thus assured beforehand.

595 114 (ii) *Information gathered concerning the functioning of polyandry in Ladak*

From all these families that I visited with Nono Tseten P'hüntzok between the 30th August and the 18th September 1938, I gathered much information as to the rules of polyandry, and how these marriages functioned.

184 595 I heard thus of the manner in which polyandry is regulated in Ladak. In many ways, it appeared to be very similar to what I had already learned in Lahul, except that, perhaps because of the climate being colder, there seemed to be less sexual privacy. Another reason for this, probably, was that the Ladaki is more sedentary than the Lahuli and does not leave his home as regularly on commercial trips, so that one alone out of a woman's many husbands remains with her; in Ladak, all the brothers are almost constantly resident in the family house, and it is consequently more difficult to establish a sort of roster between them in their relations with the common wife.

595 342 [354] Every house in Leh has a large common room, well heated because the kitchen fireplace is either in it or close by, in another smaller room which communicates with it. This room is the one in which the entire family of the *k'hang-chen* lives during the long winter months, the one in which everything goes on all day and all night, eating, sleeping, procreation and the like. Its name is the *Jan-sa* (*Byan-sa*), which means "kitchen place", and I was told that the main reason for which everybody lives here in winter, herded together, is because it is warm and there is not enough fuel to heat the other rooms in the house.

595 833 Of course, it is not a rule that public mating in the *Jan-sa* takes place.

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It all depends upon how people feel about such things, my informants said. Sometimes, the wife will regulate who, of her many husbands, should be with her; at other times, one of the brothers will do so, not necessarily the eldest, but generally the one with the most personality, the one who has the greatest influence with them all. Again, it is possible for the brothers to agree among themselves as to who shall go with their wife for the night, while it is not excluded that they should all of them have relations with her in the same night. Things can be done discreetly, in the dark, with some item of furniture in front of the bed for greater privacy. But this is not always the case, and often relations between husbands and the wife take place with a lamp lit, and in full view of the others, including the children. Not much clothing, however, is discarded, partly out of modesty, but also because it is cold.

I asked here, too, if signals were ever made use of at the door, should the marriage not be consummated in the common room. This question was usually received with great guffaws of laughter; the very idea seemed to amuse them. No, they said, there were no signals; nobody ever left anything at the door. As far as they knew, it had never been done, either.

To my question as to how, then, did they decide who should sleep with the common wife, one of my informants (at the Od-ldan household) looked at me slily and asked if I were, myself, married. When I answered that I was, he asked whether, then, I decided with my wife that, as let us say seven p.m. tonight, we would have intercourse? Naturally not, and he laughed; well, then it was the same with them. Such things took place tacitly, by implicit understanding, and with tact, not in accordance with a pre-arranged programme.

My investigations as to the possibility of jealousy affecting the relations between the husbands of a polyandrous Ladaki family led to the same results as in Lahul. I was told that nobody could afford to be jealous, that it was a luxury in which those who were rich enough to divide up property in other, less austere environments than theirs, could indulge. The Reverend W. Asboe was of the opinion that the ordinary average Ladaki was "not very passionate" as he put it, and that for this reason, they could not really feel the pangs of jealousy. He attributed this lack of passion to the altitude and to the climate which was so cold, and as proof of his allegation, he said that the Moslems, who elsewhere were so fiery about sexual matters and men's honour in these things, were also devoid of passion in Ladak, and often accepted situations there which they would have violently rebelled against elsewhere. No-

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so, especially when, in Kyelang, I had discovered significant psychological disorders in members of polyandrous households. In Ladak, the information that I gathered was not quite as sensational, but it confirmed to a large extent what I already knew now about the psychopathology of the people of these regions.

My first such visit was to the Kashmir State hospital in Leh on the 30th August, 1938. There I met the chief physician in charge, a Dogra medical officer called Dr. M. S. Diwani. He told me that venereal diseases were, as usual, the dominant illnesses which he had to treat. He attributed their wide distribution in Ladak to contacts with Moslem traders from Sinkiang, who passed them on through the intermediary of the temporary wives which they took from the local, Buddhist population. Extra to digestive troubles due to a diet of excessive tea and *chang* drinking, there were many cases of epilepsy and hysteria. The former sickness seemed mostly to plague Moslem women, while the latter was the perogative of single Buddhist women and nuns in the nunnerise. They got attacks usually during their menstrual periods, and nearly always at night. The cure for these afflictions was in the hands of the *amchis*, who cauterized the head of the patient in prescribed places.

There was much osteomelitis about, Dr. Diwani said, and it was due to the *purdah* habits of Moslem women, because they did not get sufficient sun. The Buddhist women who worked on the fields never suffered from this illness. He knew of no cases of impotence or frigidity, as no one had been to see him for such ailments. There was madness in the area, the most significant case being that of the *Tulku* (*sPrul-sKu*) or Incarnation of Tikse Gompa (see *The Mad Tulku of Tikse* by the same author, Stepping Stones, Kalimpong, 1950). To my question as to whether he knew of homosexuality in Ladak, Dr. Diwani said that it was widespread in the monasteries, where the relations between master and novice were universally known to take on that character.

On the 1st September 1938, when I visited the Gad-po-pa (*rGad-po-pa*) household, and made its genealogy (see p. 368), I took advantage of my talk with the informant Chond who, it will be recalled, was an *amchi* or native doctor, to enquire from him about his practice. He told me that he had many cases of giddiness to deal with, and he attributed this to bad diet in the case of the men, and to irregularities in the menses of women. There were no cases of impotence or frigidity, as far as he knew, but many of anxiety and hysteria, which he had to treat, nearly always, in women. They were mainly to be found among single women and nuns, and often took the form of nervous blindness

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158 and deafness for certain periods of time. He attributed this to devils
[953] which possessed the individual concerned, and he, personally, tried to
cure them by cauterization of the head. If this did not help, the patients
[955] were advised to visit the lamas, who gave the religious formulas to eat,
or carried out exorcisms over them. Chonde showed me his cauterization instruments and a chart which guided him as to where to apply the red-hot irons.

[115] The Reverend Walter Asboe, whose Moravian Mission ran a small
[943] dispensary and hospital in the Mission House in Leh, was also informative about nervous ailments in the town. He said that men did come
[164] to be cured of impotence, but that they were nearly all physical cases
[833] and definitely not mental ones. As it was, it was not living in polyandry which made them impotent, for if the common wife was not to their
548 liking, they could always seek relief with some of the numerous prosti-
[595] tutes that were to be found in Leh. All of these professionals, he said,
[995] were Moslems, not Buddhists, and were usually recruited from among the temporary wives, converted to Mohammedanism by the Yarkandi traders, surplus women left over by the polyandry of the Buddhist Ladakis.

[158] The Reverend Asboe had come across no cases of frigidity in women,
[995] but, on the contrary, he knew of many cases of nymphomania. Again,
[833] this affliction was to be found among the Moslem women converts, never among the polyandrous wives of the Buddhist households. He
838 had also heard that homosexuality was prevalent in the monasteries,
792 and since, he said, Jaeschke's *Tibetan-English Dictionary* contained all the numerous Tibetan terms for various sexual perversions, it seemed from this that these were widespread throughout Ladak.

[115] Nono Tse-P'hün, as my principal interpreter and informant, was of an opposite opinion. He said that homosexuality was a punishable offence in Kashmiri law, and therefore did not exist in Ladak. It was looked upon with great disfavour anyhow, by the Ladakis, and he felt sure that no one indulged in it, not even in the monasteries. In Tibet, it was another matter, he added, and it was known that it was practised in the large monasteries of Central Tibet, as any monk returning from Lhasa or Shigatse where he had gone for his studies could tell.

296 With regard to prostitution, this is the place perhaps, to mention
171 what Joseph Gergan once told me about the smoking of tobacco. I had asked him on the 14th October 1938, in Kargil, as we were travelling together towards the Kashmir capital, Srinagar, how it was that in the whole of Tibet and in areas under the cultural influence of that country,